

RESPONSE UNDER 37 C.F.R. § 1.111
U. S. Application No. 09/873,388

REMARKS

Claims 1-16 are all the claims pending in the application.

Claims 1-16 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over newly-cited Nozaki (US 2001/0026371) in view of newly-cited Iwadate et al. (US 5,592,305).^{FN}

Since the filing date (June 5, 2000) of the foreign priority document of the present application is prior to the filing date (March 23, 2001) of Nozaki, Applicant should be able to remove Nozaki as a reference by perfecting the foreign priority of the present application. To do this, Applicant files herewith a certified English translation of the foreign priority document. Since there is only one claim rejection, removing Nozaki as a reference overcomes the rejection of all of the claims.

In view of the above, reconsideration and allowance of this application are now believed to be in order, and such actions are hereby solicited. If any points remain in issue which the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

The USPTO is directed and authorized to charge all required fees, except for the Issue Fee and the Publication Fee, to Deposit Account No. 19-4880. Please also credit any overpayments to said Deposit Account.

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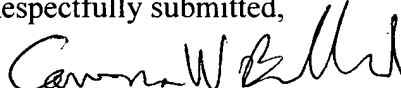
WASHINGTON OFFICE

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CUSTOMER NUMBER

Date: February 2, 2005

Respectfully submitted,



Cameron W. Beddard
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^{FN} The Office Action incorrectly states that the claims are rejected over Nozaki in view of Luo.